



## OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

### 5 CFR Part 551

[Docket ID: OPM-2026-0467]

RIN: 3206-AO74

### FLSA Claims and Compliance

**AGENCY:** Office of Personnel Management.

**ACTION:** Direct final rule.

**SUMMARY:** The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is issuing this direct final rule to update the provisions concerning Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) claims submissions to OPM.

**DATES:** This direct final rule (DFR) is effective [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] unless significant adverse comment is submitted by [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]. If OPM receives significant adverse comment, OPM will publish a timely withdrawal in the Federal Register.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments on the Federal eRulemaking Portal:

<https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for sending comments.

All comments received will be posted without change, including any personal information provided. To ensure that your comments are considered, you must submit them within the specified open comment period. Before finalizing this rule, OPM will consider all comments within the scope of the regulations received on or before the closing date for comments. OPM may make changes to the final rule after considering the comments received.

A summary of this rule may be found in the docket for this rulemaking at [www.regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Joe Knouff by email at [adjudications@opm.gov](mailto:adjudications@opm.gov) or (202) 606-7948.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Subpart G of 5 CFR part 551 prescribes general procedures applicable to claims under FLSA (29 U.S.C. 201 et seq.) that may be filed with and decided by OPM pursuant to 29 U.S.C. 204(f). Section 204(f) gives OPM the authority to administer the Act's provisions for most Federal civilian employees, including FLSA exemption status determinations, claims for minimum wage or overtime pay, and complaints arising under the child labor provisions. Claims administered by other agencies pursuant to specific statutory authority, claims concerning matters that are subject to negotiated grievance procedures under collective bargaining agreements that do not exclude FLSA matters, and claims already filed in a court of competent jurisdiction are not subject to these provisions. OPM developed an electronic filing (eFile) system to support existing regulatory provisions. That system will be used for all appeals and claims to allow for faster receipt facilitating OPM's processing and review. To comply with this and inform the public, OPM must update its administrative claims regulations in 5 CFR part 551, subpart G, which address FLSA claims for Federal employees.

With this rule, OPM updates the provisions concerning administrative claims submissions by removing the inaccurate information such as the OPM office name and mailing address. It also removes the request for a facsimile number. OPM is also revising the submission provision to require, with limited exception, use of OPM's electronic filing (eFile) system for filing a claim. This includes when an agency submits a claimant's claim to OPM at the request of the claimant. OPM is also requiring claims to include a verifiable signature (such as a wet or digital signature), the employing agency name, and the claimant's email address. This information will allow efficient review of claims and facilitate communication with the appropriate people. With the eFile system, it is important that OPM capture the claimant's email address on the claim submission.

Claims filed before [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN FEDERAL REGISTER] will be processed under the requirements in effect on the date of

submission or postmark. Any submissions on or after [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN FEDERAL REGISTER] must comply with the requirements of this part as amended by this rule. OPM notes that it currently accepts claims submitted by mail and email. Claims that are already in process will continue to be processed outside of the new eFile system.

### **Direct Final Rule Justification**

This is a rule of agency organization, procedure, or practice and is therefore exempt from the prior notice-and-comment requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(A). The rule prescribes the manner and format in which claims and supporting documents are submitted to OPM. It does not change who is eligible to file a claim, the substantive bases on which a claim may be brought, the applicable time limits for filing, the evidence required to establish a claim, or the standards OPM applies in adjudicating claims. Because the rule governs the process for submitting matters to OPM rather than the substantive standards that determine their outcome, it does not alter the substantive rights or obligations of claimants.

OPM acknowledges that the rule changes the required method of filing by directing claimants to use OPM's eFile system in place of postal mail or electronic mail. To ensure that this procedural change does not impede any claimant's ability to file, the rule preserves an exemption process under which OPM may authorize an alternative method of filing for a party or representative who cannot reasonably file electronically (§ 551.710(b)(7)). The change in filing method therefore does not deprive any claimant of the ability to submit a claim or affect the substantive disposition of claims.

As an independent and alternative basis, OPM finds under 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) that notice and public comment are unnecessary and that good cause exists to proceed without prior notice and comment. The rule makes procedural and technical changes—correcting outdated office and contact information and directing filers to OPM's electronic filing system. OPM does not anticipate significant adverse comment but is issuing the rule as a direct final rule and will

withdraw it and proceed by notice of proposed rulemaking if it receives significant adverse comment.

This rule will be effective [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN FEDERAL REGISTER], without further action unless significant adverse comments are received. A significant adverse comment is one that explains: (1) why the rule is inappropriate, including challenges to the rule's underlying premise or approach; or (2) why the direct final rule will be ineffective or unacceptable without a change. If such comments are received, this direct final rule will be withdrawn and a proposed rule for comments will be published. If no such comments are received, this direct final rule will become effective 45 days after the comment period expires. In determining whether a significant adverse comment necessitates withdrawal of this direct final rule, OPM will consider whether the comment raises an issue serious enough to warrant a substantive response had it been submitted in a standard notice and comment process. A comment recommending an addition to the rule will not be considered significant and adverse unless the comment explains how this direct final rule would be ineffective without the addition.

### **Expected Impact of This Direct Final Rule**

OPM determined that this rule was needed to correct outdated information in the regulations and to allow for the use of modern technology in its interactions with Federal employees, former Federal employees, or survivors of deceased Federal employees who experience a delay in processing times due to the current mail-in procedures of claims. Moving to the eFile system is a more secure and cost-effective way to receive claims and appeals, as claims are often delayed by mail processing and can be misrouted. In addition, claims may be delayed while being scanned for processing. Using the eFile system eliminates the possibility of misrouting and the need to scan in the claims. It also will expedite the processing of cases, allowing the adjudication of cases to be more timely. The level of confidentiality will not be compromised with Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) cases because, like the process today, OPM

reviews the claim first to comply with any claimant request for confidentiality prior to reaching out to the agency to inform the agency that a claim has been filed.

## **Regulatory Compliance**

### *Regulatory Review*

OPM has examined the impact of this rule as required by Executive Orders 12866 and 13563, which direct agencies to assess all costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits (including potential economic, environmental, public health and safety effects, distributive impacts, and equity). The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has determined that this rule is not a “significant regulatory action” under section 3(f) of Executive Order 12866. This rule is considered an Executive Order 14192 deregulatory action.

### *Regulatory Flexibility Act*

The Director of OPM certifies that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities because it is a non-substantive, procedural rule.

### *Federalism*

This rule will not have substantial direct effects on the States, on the relationship between the National Government and the States, or on distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 13132, the Director of OPM certifies that this direct final rule does not have federalism implications that require preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

### *Civil Justice Reform*

This rulemaking meets the relevant standards of Executive Order 12988.

### *Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995*

Section 202 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA) requires that agencies assess anticipated costs and benefits before issuing any rule that would impose spending costs on State, local, or tribal governments in the aggregate, or on the private sector, in

any 1 year of \$100 million in 1995 dollars, updated annually for inflation. That threshold is currently approximately \$206 million. This rulemaking will not result in the expenditure by State, local, or tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector, in excess of the threshold. Thus, no written assessment of unfunded mandates is required.

#### *Congressional Review Act*

The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs has determined this rule does not meet the criteria listed in 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

#### *Paperwork Reduction Act*

This regulatory action will change the reporting or recordkeeping requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35). OPM has created an eFile system for use in collecting and maintaining adjudication records for a variety of different existing regulatory provisions. That system will be used to support the changes in this final rule. OPM has submitted a request for a new information collection to the Office of Management and Budget for the eFile system (see 91 FR 46802 (July 24, 2026)).

After review of OPM's existing System of Records Notices (SORNs), OPM has determined that the following SORNs may apply to information stored in the eFile system: OPM/GOVT-1, OPM/GOVT-9, OPM/CENTRAL-2, OPM/CENTRAL-5, and OPM/CENTRAL-9. OPM may disclose information outside the agency when such disclosure is compatible with the purpose for which the information was collected. The information collected through the eFile system may be shared outside of OPM pursuant to the routine uses published in the following System of Records Notices: OPM/GOVT-1, General Personnel Records; OPM/GOVT-9, File on Position Classification Appeals, Job Grading Appeals, Retained Grade or Pay Appeals, and Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Claims and Complaints; OPM/CENTRAL-2, Complaints and Inquiries Records; OPM/CENTRAL-5, Intergovernmental Personnel Act Assignment Records; and OPM/CENTRAL-9, OPM Suitability Adjudications Files. Principal routine uses include:

- To parties engaged in the adjudication or review of the matter, such as entities responsible for appeals, oversight, or administrative review.
- To individuals or organizations participating in fact finding or decision making, including witnesses, subject matter experts, consultants, or others assisting in resolving the matter.
- To oversight or compliance bodies responsible for reviewing program integrity, privacy compliance, or adherence to applicable laws, rules, or policies.
- To entities responsible for addressing potential violations of law, where the information indicates a possible breach of civil or criminal statutes.
- To courts or adjudicative bodies when the information is relevant to litigation or administrative proceedings.
- To contractors or service providers engaged by OPM to support system operations, case management, or other authorized functions, when access is necessary for them to perform their duties.
- To records management authorities responsible for ensuring proper maintenance, archiving, or disposition of Federal records.

### **List of subjects in 5 CFR Part 551**

Government employees, Wages.

### **Signing Statement**

The Director of OPM, Scott Kupor, reviewed and approved this document and has authorized the undersigned to electronically sign and submit this document to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Office of Personnel Management.

**Jerson Matias,**

*Federal Register Liaison.*

For the reasons stated in the preamble, OPM amends 5 CFR Part 551 as follows:

**PART 551—PAY ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT**

1. The authority citation for part 551 is revised to read as follows:

**Authority:** 5 U.S.C. 5542(c); 29 U.S.C. 204(f).

**Subpart G—FLSA Claims and Compliance**

2. Amend § 551.702 by revising paragraph (c) to read as follows:

**§ 551.702 Time limits.**

\* \* \* \* \*

(c) *Preserving the claim period.* A claimant or a claimant's designated representative may preserve the claim period by submitting a claim, in writing or electronically, either to the agency employing the claimant during the claim period or to OPM. The date the agency or OPM receives the claim is the date that determines the period of possible entitlement to back pay. The claimant is responsible for proving when the claim was received by the agency or OPM and for retaining documentation to establish when the claim was received by the agency or OPM, such as by retaining proof of agency receipt using certified, return receipt mail, by requesting the agency provide written acknowledgment of receipt of the claim, or by retaining the electronic acknowledgement of receipt from OPM's eFile system. If a claim for back pay is established, the claimant will be entitled to pay for a period of up to 2 years (3 years for a willful violation) back from the date the claim was received.

3. Amend § 551.705 by revising paragraphs (b), (c) introductory text, (c)(1), and (c)(5) to read as follows:

**§ 551.705 Filing an FLSA claim.**

\* \* \* \* \*

(b) *FLSA claim filed with agency.* An FLSA claim filed with an agency should be made according to appropriate agency procedures. At the request of the claimant, the agency may forward the claim to OPM using the eFile system on the claimant's behalf. The claimant is

responsible for ensuring that OPM receives all the information requested in paragraph (c) of this section.

(c) *FLSA claim filed with OPM.* An FLSA claim filed with OPM must be made in writing and must be signed (in a verifiable manner, e.g., wet or digital signature) or attested to by the claimant or the claimant's representative. Relevant information may be submitted to OPM at any time following the initial submission of a claim to OPM and prior to OPM's decision on the claim. The claim must include the following:

(1) The identity of the claimant (see § 551.706(a)(2) regarding requesting confidentiality) and any designated representative, the agency employing the claimant during the claim period, the position (job title, series, and grade, or equivalent level) occupied by the claimant during the claim period, the current mailing address, email address, and telephone number of the claimant and any designated representative;

\* \* \* \* \*

(5) Evidence available to the claimant or the claimant's designated representative which supports the claim, including the identity, telephone number, and location of other individuals who may be able to provide information relating to the claim;

\* \* \* \* \*

4. Revise § 551.710 to read as follows:

**§ 551.710 Procedures for submitting an FLSA claim.**

(a) *Filing a claim.* An employee, or his or her authorized representative designated under § 551.704, seeking to file a claim or a request to reopen and reconsider under this part must use the eFile system available at <https://opmefile.opm.gov/hc/en-us>. Absent an approved exemption under paragraph (b)(7), OPM will not accept the filing of a claim, a request to reopen and reconsider evidence, or other supporting documents via electronic mail or postal mail.

(b) *Electronic filing (eFile) procedures.* (1) Each party and its representative(s) to a claim or request to reopen and reconsider must register as instructed by OPM on its website using a unique email address.

(2) Registration as an eFiler constitutes consent to accept electronic service of all documents, records, notices, and decisions filed by the agency, claimant, or issued by OPM. No party may electronically file any document with OPM or access a claim or a request to reopen and reconsider a claim unless registered as an eFiler.

(3) All notices, decisions, and other documents issued by OPM, as well as all documents filed by parties, will be made available for viewing and downloading at OPM's eFile system. Access to documents is limited to the parties and their representatives who are registered eFilers in the cases in which they were filed.

(4) All parties and their representatives must follow the instructions on OPM's website for properly filing all claims, evidence, and other documents. OPM may strike a document where an eFiler repeatedly fails to follow these instructions following receipt of a show cause order.

(5) Each eFiler must promptly update his or her profile in OPM's eFile system. The eFile system will alert OPM and other parties of any change made to an address, telephone number, or email address in each pending case with which they are associated. eFilers are also responsible for monitoring case activity regularly in OPM's eFile system to ensure that they have received all case-related documents and updates.

(6) A party or representative may withdraw registration as an eFiler pursuant to the instructions posted on OPM's website. Withdrawing registration in OPM's eFile system means that, effective upon OPM's processing of a proper withdrawal, all filings, evidence, orders, and other documents filed by a party or party's representative and OPM will no longer be available to that person electronically and that person will no longer have electronic access to case records through OPM's eFile system. OPM may still process a claim or request to reopen and reconsider

after a party or a party's representative withdraws as an eFiler. Withdrawal as a party or party's representative will not be considered good cause for staying a case.

(7) OPM, in its sole and exclusive discretion, may exempt a party or representative from registering as an eFiler. A party or representative must promptly contact OPM as instructed on OPM's website to request an exemption from the eFiling requirements in this part. OPM will not find good cause for failing to file a claim timely or seek to request to reopen and reconsider a decision if the party or representative fails to contact OPM to request an exemption before any deadline to file a claim or seek to request to reopen and reconsider.

(8) Documents filed in OPM's eFile system are deemed received on the date of the electronic submission. The party submitting the claim or any documents will receive acknowledgment of receipt of the claim and submission of any documents to support the claim.